

**DARKE**

**2018**

THE

**NICK DARKE**  
AWARD

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Celebrating new plays by great writers

**Submission Information**

**FALMOUTH**  
UNIVERSITY

**falmouth.ac.uk**

# NICK DARKE

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Born and educated in Cornwall, England, the playwright Nick Darke studied acting at Rose Bruford College, Kent before learning his craft at The Victoria Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent. Here Nick performed in over 80 plays and in 1978 wrote his first play, **Never Say Rabbit in a Boat**. Its success led him to give up acting and in the following year he won the George Devine Award.

His work attracted further commissions and everything he wrote for the theatre was produced. This included 24 plays that were staged at The National Theatre, London; The Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-upon-Avon; The Bush, London; by Kneehigh Theatre and at The Royal Court, London.

He wrote several radio plays and made documentaries for radio and also successfully wrote for television and film.

He moved back to Cornwall in 1990 and enjoyed the life of his childhood, fishing and wrecking (beachcombing). In 2001 he had a stroke which affected his speech and reading and writing. He and his wife Jane made the film, **The Wrecking Season** about the contacts he made tracing fishing gear back to the east coast of America. (Broadcast by BBC Four in 2005 and 2010)

Nick died of cancer in 2005, aged 56 with his funeral held on the beach. He and Jane filmed the last few months of his life. She made the film **The Art of Catching Lobsters** (BBC Four 2007) about their life together and grief. They have two sons; Jim is a marine scientist, Henry a filmmaker and writer.

For more information about Nick's life and work please visit:  
[falmouth.ac.uk/nickdarkeaward](http://falmouth.ac.uk/nickdarkeaward)

# NICK DARKE

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Extract from: **DANGER MY ALLY**  
(A play about eco warriors)

*He checks his watch*

Twelve minutes!

*He tries the door. it is securely locked*

Marvin. Since we have so little time left I wish to make a confession. I am a deep ecologist, that goes without saying. I don't use motor-driven transport. I don't burn fossil fuels. I take the side of nature over culture. I believe in the defence of the wild, the natural and non-human, all animals have an equal claim to Mother Earth, an equal right to dignity. I am, therefore, naturally a vegan Marvin. What else?! But it wasn't always so. I was once a voracious consumer of butchers' meat!

*He takes from a secret pocket deep within the bag, a string of sausages*

These are my favourite sausages. I was never able to forgo them. I would last for perhaps three days then my taste buds would explode for want of a sausage. I would find myself in a trance heading for the abattoir. Knock, knock on the back door.

*A **SLAUGHTERMAN** holding a cleaver, plastered in blood and entrails opens the door  
He calls over his shoulder:*

**SLAUGHTERMAN**

Hey boys! It's that crazy vegan again!

*He produces a sausage from behind his ear and holds it tantalisingly above **ELF's** head*

***ELF** slavers and whimpers*

*The **SLAUGHTERMAN** sings a song:*

**SONG**

The pig inside this sausage was genetically bred  
The pig inside this sausage was born without a head  
To eat, to sleep, to think, to dream, this piggy had no need

The pig inside this sausage was a lucky pig indeed.

The pig inside this sausage never felt the cold  
The pig inside this sausage was young but never old  
To hope, to love, to fear, to fail this piggy paid no heed,  
The pig inside this sausage was a lucky pig indeed.

The pig inside this sausage never broke the law,  
The pig inside this sausage never went to war  
It never had its throat cut, it never had to bleed,  
The pig inside this sausage is a lucky pig indeed.

***ELF** kneels and clasps his hands*

**ELF**

O please **Mr. Slaughterman**, give me the sausage?

*The **SLAUGHTERMAN** drops the sausage into **ELF's** hand and vanishes*

***ELF** eats the sausage voraciously*

**ELF**

There. I have made my confession. I am ready for death.

*He lies down, takes a shirt from the floor and covers his face, crosses his arms over his chest*



# THE AWARD

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The Nick Darke Award was set up in 2006 to celebrate the best writing for stage, screen and radio.

The Award is open to all writers with a prize of £6,000.

The category is stage play.

## The Judges

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### Jeremy Howe

Drama Commissioning  
Editor for Radio 4, UK

### Molly Dineen

BAFTA and Royal Television Society award-winning UK television documentary director, cinematographer and producer

### Roger Michell

Theatre, television and film director whose work includes the films *Notting Hill*, *Changing Lanes* and *Morning Glory*

### Margaret Matheson

Producer for cinema and television, her credits include the original *Scum* (banned by the BBC), *Abigail's Party* and Oscar winning *Antonia's Line*

### Jon Plowman

Television and film producer responsible for producing and commissioning many great comedy successes including *The Office* and *French & Saunders*

### Nina Raine

Award-winning theatre director and playwright whose plays include *RABBIT* and *TRIBES*

### Nick Hern

London's leading independent specialist publisher of plays, theatre books and screenplays

The Nick Darke Award was conceived by his wife, the artist and film-maker Jane Darke, with the support of his family. Nick Darke wrote in many forms but earned his living in the world of theatre, screen and radio.

With the opportunity to win £6,000 and open to all writers, this competition provides the time to write that financial support facilitates.

Applicants should submit a full stage play script along with a one-page synopsis by **Monday 21 May 2018**. The submissions will be read by a group of readers who will produce a longlist for the Longlist Committee. The Longlist Committee will reduce the submissions to a final shortlist of eight for the judges. Announcement of the winner will take place at an Award Ceremony in autumn 2018.

The Nick Darke Award is solely funded by Falmouth University through the Academy of Music and Theatre Arts (AMATA) and the School of Writing & Journalism. The relationship between Falmouth and the Award recognises Nick Darke's impact across the arts and endeavours to continue his legacy through the promotion of talent.

**[falmouth.ac.uk/nickdarkeaward](http://falmouth.ac.uk/nickdarkeaward)**

## Contact information

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[nickdarkeaward@falmouth.ac.uk](mailto:nickdarkeaward@falmouth.ac.uk)  
[falmouth.ac.uk/nickdarkeaward](http://falmouth.ac.uk/nickdarkeaward)

@FalmouthUni  
#NickDarkeAward



# FALMOUTH UNIVERSITY

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Established in 1902, Falmouth University has grown from School of Art to become a digital creative hub, with an expanding network of partners in the UK and overseas. It's through innovation and enterprise that Falmouth University is helping to grow the Cornish economy, expanding the region as a centre for the Creative Industries and working with high growth businesses in key economic growth areas.

The University has a portfolio of ground breaking, industry-facing courses that are designed to help students get great jobs across the creative sector, from Acting, English and Fine Art, to Computing for Games, Textile Design and Business.

The Award is funded by Falmouth University's Academy of Music and Theatre Arts (AMATA) and the School of Writing & Journalism. An international venue, AMATA provides an intensive and connected environment for the study and practice of the performing arts. The School of Writing & Journalism offers practice-based creative and professional writing courses alongside English degrees that focus on wide critical reading within relevant cultural contexts.

**falmouth.ac.uk**

## **Falmouth University's Academic Departments**

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Academy of Music and Theatre Arts  
Falmouth Business School  
Falmouth School of Art  
Fashion & Textiles Institute  
Games Academy  
Institute of Photography  
School of Architecture, Design & Interiors  
School of Communication Design  
School of Film & Television  
School of Writing & Journalism

## **The Nick Darke Archive**

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Falmouth University is delighted to hold the professional archive of Nick Darke, following the generous donation of papers from his family. The Collection contains a broad range of preparatory work and scripts for his 30 plays, along with publicity, promotional material, photographs and correspondence. Nick's work for television, film and radio is also well represented. Inspiring, humbling, humorous, and at times deeply moving, the records document Nick's interest in environmental issues, music, Cornish history and culture, as well as his recovery from a stroke in 2001. Nick's wife, Jane, continues to be involved with both the Collection and its use.

The Collection is complemented well by other holdings relating to performance activity in Cornwall, including the archives of Wildworks and Kneehigh theatre companies, the latter whom Nick wrote for on many occasions.

The Collection is widely available to all, by appointment in the Library on the Penryn Campus. We enthusiastically welcome applicants to the Nick Darke Award keen to learn more about his craft.

For more information or to arrange access please contact us:

Tel: +44 (0)1326 255738  
Email: [archives@fxplus.ac.uk](mailto:archives@fxplus.ac.uk)  
[@FXArchives](http://library.fxplus.ac.uk/archives)

# SUBMISSION INFORMATION

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## 1 Eligibility

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- 1.1 The application must be made in English.
- 1.2 The competition is open to all national and international writers aged 16 and over.
- 1.3 The writer must be the sole original author. The competition is not open to collaborations.
- 1.4 We do not accept submissions that have previously been produced, had a rehearsed reading or won other competitions.
- 1.5 We do not accept submissions of scripts previously entered into the Nick Darke Award.
- 1.5 We do not accept musicals or adaptations.

## 2 Criteria

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- 2.1 Stage play. No theme.

## 3 Submission procedure

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- 3.1 Please submit a full stage play script (minimum of 45 minutes in length, no maximum) and a one page synopsis about the play in PDF format to: [nickdarkeaward@falmouth.ac.uk](mailto:nickdarkeaward@falmouth.ac.uk)
- 3.3 All submissions should be entered anonymously, do not include a name, address or email on the script. Please put contact details in the email with your submission.
- 3.4 Confirmation of receipt of entry will be sent by email.
- 3.5 Late or incomplete entries will not be considered.
- 3.6 The deadline for submissions is 17:00 (GMT) Monday 21 May 2018.

## 4 Judging procedure

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- 4.1 Your work will be considered by a selection of readers who will compile a longlist for the Longlist Committee. The Longlist Committee will reduce the submissions to a final shortlist of eight for the judges.
- 4.2 Shortlisted applicants will be notified by Friday 7 September 2018. The shortlist will be announced on: [falmouth.ac.uk/nickdarkeaward](http://falmouth.ac.uk/nickdarkeaward) at which time the scripts will no longer be anonymous and writers' names will be released.
- 4.3 Unsuccessful applicants will not be notified, please assume your work has not been shortlisted if you haven't heard from us by Friday 7 September 2018.
- 4.4 The Nick Darke Award cannot enter into any correspondence regarding a submission nor can it offer any editorial notes or guidance. The shortlist and winner of the Award will be published on [falmouth.ac.uk/nickdarkeaward](http://falmouth.ac.uk/nickdarkeaward).
- 4.4 The judges will select one winner from the eight shortlisted writers.
- 4.5 The winner will be announced at an award ceremony in autumn 2018.

## 5 The Winner

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- 5.1 The winning entrant will receive £6,000.

## 6 The small print

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- 6.1 The copyright for the piece remains solely with the author. However the Nick Darke Award must be credited on all subsequent publicity material.
- 6.2 The winning writer must make themselves and their winning piece available for all publicity purposes within reason. This may include a performance or reading of the work during the Award Ceremony.